MARIE BURCHER (nee BIRD ALLEN)
Biographical Data: Born 1921 in Bland, Virginia
Education: Graduated Longwood College in 1941; majored in Mathematics and History
NACA/NASA Experience: Employed 1942-1949; Computer at 8 Foot High Speed Tunnel;
Head Computer 16 Foot Tunnel

Marie Burcher began at Langley during World War II. She was teaching in Norfolk, when a friend who worked at NACA told her about jobs available there. Hired immediately, Burcher joined Helen Willey in the computing section at the 8 Foot High Speed Tunnel, and later was promoted to Head Computer at the 16 Foot Tunnel. During World War II, the computers worked both day and evening shifts to keep up with demand. In a 1990 interview, Burcher described work at the tunnel as a "team effort," where the engineers, computers, and other tunnel employees got along well together and worked collaboratively to get research projects done. As Head Computer, she was in charge of assigning projects, and remembered her computing section as "a very capable group of girls." Burcher remained at Langley until her first child was born, and later in life, pursued a second career as an historical interpreter at Colonial Williamsburg.

Sources: Beverly Golemba, *Human Computers: The Women in Aeronautical Research*,
          unpublished manuscript 1994, NASA Langley Archives.
Video interview with James Hansen "From the Slide Rule to the Super Computer: An Oral History of Aerospace Computing at Langley," filmed 1990.